

December 15, 1975

Mr. Rochelle Thompson
Scattergood School
West Branch, IA 52358

Dear Friend Thompson:

Thank you for the note you left on my desk, and please be assured of my respect for your opinion. Every man is entitled to one.

Society has a right and a duty to do many things to people, and has done so even in the most just societies. It has a right to put to death people who cruelly murder, rape, and otherwise grossly mistreat their fellow citizens.

Similarly, it has a right and duty to prevent people from reproducing when the prospects are overwhelmingly large that their children will be feeble-minded and chronically dependent on other people. This is not killing anybody; it is simply preventing the appearance on earth of people who will have to burden other people in perpetuity. There is no justice involved in the reproduction of Juke, Kallikaks and morons. The good thing about it is that we know enough about genetics to prevent this continuing tragedy from occurring.

There is no absolute justice in the world. If there were, society might not let a mother have an abortion on the ground that the unborn child has an absolute right to birth, even if it is conceived as a result of a rape or is destined to be hopelessly crippled because the mother consumed drugs during the pregnancy.

The Swiss and the Danes came to the same conclusion many years ago and we have a long way to go before our society is as fair and equitable as theirs.

Very truly yours,

Harry M. Caudill

HMC/afc